

Prey And Predator - Part 2 of 3

by Dr. Raven Horror PhD

Category: Buffy: The Vampire Slayer

Genre: Adventure

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-02-02 09:00:00

Updated: 2000-02-02 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 12:54:34

Rating: M

Chapters: 1

Words: 4,835

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: There is a new breed of monster in Sunnydale...but is it one to fight or befriend?

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> Author: Dr. Raven, Horror PhD
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> Summary: There's a new breed of monster in Sunnydale. But is it one to fight or befriend?
 Feedback: Praise and constructive criticism welcomed. Just remember that, contrary to popular belief, I'm an actual person with feelings and an unstable ego. :)

> Distribution: Please ask before distributing.
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>
 CHAPTER 8

>
 Rupert Giles could not sleep. He paced in his living room, a cup of tea in one hand. What he had seen tonight both fascinated and frightened him. He had never met such an intriguing woman. If she were indeed harmless, the things she could teach both he and Buffy. The war could easily be won. To hell with the Council firing him. With this sort of grand creature fighting for them and with them, the Council would be the least of his worries. Why not even try to persuade her to bend the "no eating humans" rule? he thought. No, that's Ripper talking. Absurd. He fought to control the urges of violence and hate within him. All those emotions, springing from his hurt.

>
 "If you keep suppressing your nature, you'll go insane, get an ulcer, or both," a dark voice rang out from behind him.

>
 Giles spun, dropping his tea cup, which shattered instantly as it hit the floor. Sitting, perched atop his couch was the woman with whom he was so intrigued.

>
 "See, it's happening already," Raven said with a smile.
"You're so jumpy. So tense."
>
 "How...how did you get in here?" Giles stammered.
>
 "What does it matter?" she asked, swinging her legs around and slipping off the back of the sofa. "I'm here. You're here. You have unanswered questions, and I have the answers."
>
 She moved slowly towards him, her stride a dead giveaway to what she was. Giles watched her movement with fascination. It was not human. It was animal, and it was beautiful, filled with a deadly sort of grace.
>
 "Nothing escapes you," she continued. "Your mind is like an open book to me."
>
 "Is it good reading?" Giles quipped.
>
 Raven chuckled. "Well, I much prefer the New York Times, but it'll do."
>
 She was now standing inches from him. Her scent was intoxicating, both wild and sweet. Her beauty was beyond description. Her eyes were so deep with innocence and cunning.
>
 She took his hand. Her touch sent shivers through his body and warmed him with a strange sort of fire. So enchanting, and so out of reach, he thought.
>
 "Not as much as you may think," she said, leading him back to the sofa. "Listen," she said, sitting down, "you asked me tonight why you should fear certain members of my pack, and I could not give you an answer. You knew I was hiding something. The truth of it is, that I could not tell you there, with that group. They are so innocent, and the reasons are so complicated. But you deserve an explanation."

>
 Giles sat beside her, never taking his focus from her gaze. He wanted to learn everything she had to tell.
>
 "Deacon is a danger for obvious reasons," Raven continued. "He was a pure vampire, brought across by Razor in one of her fleeting moments of stupidity. She was taken with his prey drive. He was dangerous as a vampire, and is even more so now as one of us. He is very young by our standards, only having a few years under his belt since he was turned. He does not conform well to authority, and challenges myself and the other members of the pack constantly. He still has a drive for humans. One of us must be with him constantly until he can be trusted. And, I cannot say for sure if that day will ever come."
>
 "Can't he be exiled?" Giles asked.
>
 "Exile for us is death to someone," Raven said flatly. "Either Deacon would die a victim of my pack's rage, or he would mount a resistance and kill some of my people. Neither option is one I wish to pursue. Although, I have a very bad feeling that one day, I may have to confront him."
>
 "And Razor?"
>
 "Razor," Raven sighed. "She is another matter entirely. She is one of my children. I brought her over as a human. Again, I was impressed with her strength. As a human, she was an exotic dancer, turning tricks for men, only she had a slight twist to her tricks. Once she slept with a man, she would kill them...and quite brutally. I took her under my wing and promised her immortality. It worked for a while. She was the best guardian to me, and the best hunting companion. It was like we were the same soul, sharing two separate bodies. But, as the years have progressed, she has let the beast consume her. She feeds too much on what she was, and is letting it influence what she becomes. When she turned Deacon, I knew she had lost what I admired so much about her."
>
 "I'm sorry," Giles said, reaching out to her. Raven took his

hand, looking into his eyes and continuing her story.

>
 "It's not your fault, nor is it mine," she said. "Razor and Deacon have taken another path. Unfortunately, it is a dangerous one, for both them and me. I fear that one day soon they will challenge me, and the others under me, who are oblivious to their scheming. I warned you and your charges to stay clear of them for that very reason. You and I and your slayer, as well as her friends have something in common. We hate vampires. We want them eradicated. Razor and Deacon believe they are superior to everyone and everything, and want world domination. They'll kill anyone or anything that tries to stop them."

>
 Giles couldn't take his eyes from Raven's. His head was swimming with so many questions. It was endless. He did not know where to begin. He understood with much clarity what she had just told him, and he wanted to help her. What he did not know was why he wanted to help her. Then the questions hit him again. What was she? Where did she come from? What is the history of her nature? Her species? Was it a species? A mutation? Both? Could she eat human food? Experience human pleasures? Did she have a formal education? How does an immortal "grow up" if they are born one of her kind? All of these questions and more left Giles' mind spinning.

>
 Raven sensed his confusion. She brought her hand up and gently caressed his face, her expression revealing only gentle tenderness.

>
 "I know there is much you want to know," she said. "I wish I had the time to tell you everything. But, sadly, time is not on our side. Every moment that passes is one that allows Deacon and Razor to grow stronger. And growing with their strength is the feeling deep inside me that a confrontation is near."

>
 "Can I ask just one question?" Giles inquired of her.

>
 Raven smiled and sat back. "One question I have the time for."

>
 "Why did you come here?" Giles asked.

>
 "Are you kidding?" Raven laughed. "This town is crawling with vampires and other unnatural evils. I'm surprised you haven't encountered our kind before. Metaphorically speaking, it's as if Sunnydale has set up a wonderful buffet, and is ringing the dinner bell."

>
 "And what happens when the food runs out?"

>
 "Ah, you said just one question," Raven said with a smirk. She stood and walked casually towards the door. "But the answer is that the food won't run out for quite some time, and when it does..." she said, turning back, "we'll move on, I suppose."

>
 She turned and headed for the door once more. Giles rose, quickly moving towards her. Catching her by the arm, he stopped her.

>
 Raven turned briskly and looked up at his face. She saw genuine concern for her in his eyes, something she was unaccustomed to. As a pack leader, she was used to concern for her out of loyalty and responsibility. What this man was showing her was concern for a totally different reason, one she could not describe, but liked.

>
 "One last question," he said.

>
 Raven turned and faced him. She stood silent and smiled.

"Well, I suppose," she said with a friendly sort of sarcasm.

>
 "Can you handle this?"

>
 Raven's face turned cold and without emotion. She looked away from Giles, not wanting him to see her fear. She thought briefly about her answer, a brief time that seemed an eternity to them both. Finally, she looked back to him.

> "Honestly?" she asked.

> "Yes."

> "No," she said, and quickly turning, left the apartment and
Giles.

> CHAPTER 9

> <p>

Now it was Raven who couldn't sleep. She paced the streets of Sunnydale, not prowling, but aimlessly wandering. Unlike most times, however, this pacing brought no clarity to the questions and the fears that she had.

>
 She hadn't gotten more than two blocks from Giles' apartment when she saw her fears materialize. Walking towards her was the duo she wanted nothing to do with at this time...Razor and Deacon.

>
 "Well, if it isn't our fearless leader!" Deacon chimed out from the distance.

>
 Raven closed the distance between them in a matter of seconds. Ignoring Deacon, she addressed Razor.

>
 "I thought we were keeping certain pack members on a short leash?" Raven inquired.

>
 Razor smiled. "You mean Deacon here?" She moved closer to him, stroking his arm. "He's been good. No humans."

>
 "Yeah, mistress," Deacon continued. "I'm what you might call a model citizen. Don't you trust me yet?"

>
 Raven turned her gaze to Deacon. Her eyes were cold, her face stern. "Deacon, I trust you about as far as a twelve year old human could throw you."

>
 Razor bristled. "What's your gripe, Raven?"

>
 "My gripe?" Raven repeated. "My gripe, dear Razor, is that our young friend here is still wandering the streets a dead giveaway to what he is. Even humans recognize him as a visible trouble maker. Our species must be powerful and beautiful, as well as seductively inconspicuous."

>
 "I think you're just looking for an excuse to destroy him," Razor accused. "Admit it, Raven, Deacon scares you. You know he could overthrow you."

>
 Raven's eyes narrowed. "Are you questioning my rank, Razor?"

>
 "If it needs to be questioned, I shall be the one to do it," she answered.

>
 Raven shook her head. "When I brought you across, I would have never dreamed this of you. You are both my greatest achievement, and my greatest disappointment, Razor."

>
 Raven turned from the two and began to walk back the way she came. Never looking back, she let the size of her stride increase until she was a good distance from them.

>
 "First thing you taught me," Razor said beneath her breath, "never turn your back on a threat."

>
 Raven, although meters away, heard the musings. She stopped cold and spun just in time to intercept Razor's charge.

>
 Raven caught her by the arm, and, turning into her, threw Razor over her shoulder and flat onto her back. Razor quickly rebounded to her knees and extended a leg, sweeping Raven off her feet.

>
 Raven fell to the ground, but kept fighting. She swung her leg in a straight line, kicking the still downed Razor square in the face. She then flipped up to her feet and settled the issue with a low crescent kick as Razor was rising, again to her face.

>
 Razor fell back, dazed. It was then that Deacon seized his

opportunity. In one leap he had closed the distance between himself and the confrontation. He landed on Raven's back, driving her again to the ground and pinning her.

>
 Raven struggled beneath her attacker, but to no avail. He had her in an iron grip. And, to make matters worse, she saw Razor begin to regain her footing from the corner of her eye. This was it. She had been double-teamed. A victim of her own advice so many years ago.

>
 Suddenly, the lock Deacon had on her released, and Deacon found himself lying on the ground, several feet away. Raven looked up to see a dark young man, an obvious victim of his own inner torment, but strong. He offered his hand to her, which she took, and pulled herself to her feet.

>
 Raven stared briefly at her savior, her senses taking over. He had helped her, yes, but knew now without a doubt that she had just been saved by the very prey she hunted. This dark young stranger was a vampire.

>
 Razor had now regained her balance and was preparing another attack. The vampire, seeing her from over Raven's shoulder, pushed Raven aside and gave Razor a palm strike to her chin just as she was advancing. Again startled, Razor stumbled back and observed the new threat. Deacon, now on his feet again, joined her.

>
 Raven turned and stood at the vampire's side, something she never imagined herself ever doing.

>
 Razor chuckled, wiping a small trickle of her own blood from her lips. "Irony, don't you think?" she quipped. "You need a common bloodsucker to save you. No matter. This is but a preview as to what is to come." She took Deacon, still growling, by the arm and led him away.

>
 Raven turned to her vampire rescuer, pondering the situation. "Why did you do that?" she asked. "You should've been glad to see me dead by their hands. One less of our kind for you to worry about."

>
 The young man smiled. "I overheard everything," he said. "It doesn't take a great deal of deduction to figure out what those two are up to. I figure that saving one pure spirit is better than aiding two spoiled ones by watching them succeed."

>
 "Well," Raven said, dropping her guard and allowing herself to smile, "whatever your reason, I am grateful. You have my loyalty for as long as you deserve it."

>
 "And whose loyalty would that be?" he asked.

>
 "I am Raven, alpha of my pack," she responded. The vampire smiled and turned away from her, walking into the shadows.

>
 "If you need me, you'll know where to find me," he said as he walked.

>
 "And you?" Raven called after him. "Just what am I to call my

> vampire savior?"

> He turned back to her momentarily. "Angel," he said, and vanished into the shadows.

> CHAPTER 10

> <p>

Razor sat perched on a stone wall near Sunnydale High, a smirk sweeping her face as she watched Deacon pace impatiently. His fangs were bared, and his disgruntled growls grew stronger with every step he took.

>
 "A vampire! A goddamned vampire! We were just defeated by a

shit-sucking vamp!"

>
 "Calm yourself," Razor said.

>
 "Calm?? We're supposed to be ruling these bastards! And yet you seem to be content to just let them toss us around!"

>
 "Deacon," Razor began, in the ever patient voice of a teacher, "what is more enjoyable? A simple kill, one that is easy, or a kill that is savored and fought for?"

>
 Deacon paused in his pacing, turning his golden eyes to Razor. He arched an eyebrow and she smiled.

>
 "What exactly do you have in mind?" he asked.

>
 "Raven's mind is an open book to me," Razor said. "She trusts me too much, even when she knows I'm an enemy. She's fallen into her usual routine. She has her sights set on another human."

>
 Deacon cringed. "No matter how many times I witness this, I still get disgusted. What could she possibly attain from a mortal? What could a mortal have to offer?"

>
 "That is a mystery I am not privy to," Razor continued. "But it is of no concern to us. What it does tell us, however, is that she is vulnerable. She likes this little group of slayers and humans. If we go after them, especially the one she has such a fondness for, her pet vampire won't make one bit of difference. She'll submit, freely and willingly. And then all will be ours for the taking."

>
 "And we kill her," Deacon hissed.

>
 "Yes, and anyone who dares oppose us."

>
 Deacon laughed wickedly. "So, who is this soon to be dead human that is the key to our kingdom?"

>
 "As if you couldn't guess..." Razor taunted.

>
 Deacon thought for a moment, a look of excitement sweeping over his face. "No!" he laughed, "That would just be too easy!"

>
 "Easy or not," Razor purred, "it's time we bagged a certain stuffy English librarian."

>
 CHAPTER 11

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As Raven made her escape from the area of her attack, she peered down at her wrists, suddenly feeling pain. So happens that Deacon managed to mar her somewhat in his little submission hold. Great, she thought to herself. Little punk managed to get in a few good scratches after all.

>
 She didn't realize the time, nor the path she was taking, a path leading her back in the same direction from which she came. Before she knew it, she was back looking at the door to Giles' apartment. No, she thought. I've involved him enough...too much, in fact.

>
 As she turned to leave, she heard the door open behind her. Being a victim of her own inattention once in a night was enough. She spun on her heels, whipping her head around only to find Giles standing in the doorway, a look of concern on his face.

>
 Raven softened her gaze. For a moment, she had forgotten where she was.

> "Are you all right?" Giles asked.

> Raven once again gazed down at her wrists, feeling the pain more than ever. "Not exactly," she sighed.

> "You'd better come in so we can get you patched up," Giles said, stepping aside. "And I won't take no for an answer."

> Raven gave him a half smile, appreciating his kindness. She stepped through the threshold, finally feeling a sense of safety.

> Giles led her to the sofa, and, easing her down, took her hands and examined the damage.

> "What happened?" he asked.

> "Deacon and Razor happened," she said flatly.

> Giles rose and disappeared briefly. He returned a few moments later with antiseptic and bandages. Sitting next to her, he began to clean and dress her wounds.

> "You don't heal as quick as a vampire," he remarked.

> "No, we heal at an accelerated pace, but not in moments like most vamps. These should be about healed by morning."

> Giles broke from wrapping Raven's wrists and looked at her straight on. "Listen," he said, "you're in danger. Why don't you let me help you? Please don't tell me that your one weakness is bullheadedness."

> Raven chuckled. "No...my one weakness is over protectiveness. Call me sentimental, but you've done so much for me already...I don't want anything to happen to you or your slayer and her friends."

> Giles smiled. "I can appreciate you not wanting any harm to come to us," he said, "and maybe it's just me, but I feel compelled to help you. Something tells me that Buffy won't want the wild cards of your pack interfering with her nightly patrols."

> "Believe me, I'm understanding you," Raven said. "I've just seen too many well-intentioned people get hurt, and I don't want to add your name to the list."

> Giles' face stiffened, "Listen, I'm going to help you whether you want me to or not. We can do this the easy way, or the hard way."

> Raven arched an eyebrow. "The hard way?" she cooed.

> "Well, um," Giles stammered, obviously embarrassed. "That's not exactly what I meant..."

> "I know exactly what you meant," Raven said, inching closer to him. "It's not the first time a human has had an attraction for me, or a member of my kind. Truth be know, if I have a weakness, it is precisely that. I fall for humans much too easily."

> A moment of awkward silence befell them both. Peering deep into his eyes, Raven saw what she wanted...someone who cared, someone she could open her soul to in every way, but most of all, someone who understood what she was, and didn't give a damn. But to pursue her feelings would be their downfall for sure. She knew how Razor operated, and she sensed the danger. Too many complications.

> She rose quickly. "Listen," she said, "I'd better go. If they track me here, we'll both be dead. I need time to prepare for this."

> Giles stood and blocked her path. "Then we prepare together," he said. "You must think I'm crazy to let you go back out there tonight. There are weapons here, if need be. We're hardly defenseless." He took a step towards her, softening his expression once more in an attempt to appeal to her softer side. "Let me help you."

> Raven stood still, her face a map of disdain. "Fine," she sighed. Better to give in than to pursue the argument. She'd done all that she could to convince him otherwise. She only hoped that he wasn't getting himself in over his head.

> "Do you have a plan?" Giles asked.

> Raven thought for a moment. "You know," she said, "I just might."

> CHAPTER 12

> <p>

The Bronze might've been the place to hang in Sunnydale, but it was most certainly not the only nightclub around. There was another establishment, not as well known for obvious reasons because of the crowd it catered to. A crowd of Raven's sort.

>
 Named The Paramount, it was located on the outskirts of town, and if someone were to look up "hole in the wall," a picture of the club would be next to the definition. It was a relatively small place, judging from the outside, but inside it seemed very spacious. The interior was dark, decorated with chains hanging from the ceiling, black lace curtains, art deco galore, and enough vampy material to make any gothic freak reach orgasmic proportions.

>
 Raven led Giles through the doors to the club quietly. Her kind kept night hours for hunting purposes, and they were risking much by entering the club during the day. To wake one of her kind was an invitation to fight for survival. It was like going into one's home unannounced and taking everyone there by surprise.

>
 Raven looked around the main floor, searching for any sign of life. She only needed to speak to one person...the club's owner, Lucius.

>
 "Something I can help you two with?" a deep voice growled from behind.

>
 Raven and Giles spun, both on guard. Raven relaxed, seeing Lucius before her. He was not a member of her pack, he had formed his own small group long ago, but he was always loyal to her and her family, and would hopefully provide her with the assistance she needed.

>
 "Lucius," Raven said. "You had me frightened there, for a moment."

>
 Lucius cocked his head to one side, "My dear, I'm not the one trespassing in another's den."

>
 "I know," she said, "but this is a matter of vital importance."

>
 Lucius smiled, "Would it have something to do with my getting a visit from two of your pack members last night?"

>
 "Razor and Deacon were here?" Raven asked.

>
 "You don't seem too surprised," Lucius commented.

>
 "I'm not. I knew they'd try to build a resistance, I just didn't think they'd have the balls to come here."

>
 "Don't worry," Lucius said, taking a step forward towards them, "I made it quite clear where my loyalties stood, but not before they told me what they're plots were." He glanced over towards Giles, eyeing him from top to bottom and snickering. "This must be the gentleman they were referring to."

>
 "Pardon me?" Giles asked.

>
 "Their plan is to use you as bait, my good fellow," Lucius said. "Bait to lure the princess here to their trap of death. It reeks of dishonor, but then again, Razor was never one to hold any respect for the old ways, and Deacon was taught by her."

>
 Raven looked to Giles with a sigh, "I told you getting involved was costly."

>
 Giles merely smiled. "If I'm with you, how can I be bait?"

>
 "Very true," Lucius interjected, "however, they know of the attachment you both have for the slayer and her friends. Trust me, sir, if they can't have you, they'll take one of them without a second thought."

>
 "He's right," Raven said, "so our time is limited."

>
 "What do you propose to do?" Lucius asked. "You know that you will have my pack's total support."

>
 "I was hoping you'd say that," Raven said. "I figure the only way to defeat Razor is through the old ways. Honorable combat. But,

as you said, she has no respect for that, and she obviously has no respect for me, so..."

>
 "We need to find someone that she won't challenge," Giles said.

>
 Lucius smiled. "If I'm thinking what you are, my dear princess, I think I may be able to arrange something."

>
 Raven smiled wickedly. "Lucius, if you would be so kind, send the message."

>
 "Consider it done," he said.

>
 CHAPTER 13

> <p>

> <p>

The next stop was the school. They had to get there before Razor and Deacon did. It was the group's only hope.

>
 Upon entering the library, they found all of them gathered together, under the seemingly watchful eye of Price, Giles' successor as Watcher.

>
 Raven strode in, Giles no more than a foot behind her. "Well, if it isn't Giles Junior!" she exclaimed. "And you are?"

>
 Before Wesley could speak, Buffy answered for him. "New watcher," she said.

>
 Raven nodded and looked to Giles, "This would be the small matter in your life you were telling me about?"

>
 "Um-hmm" Giles agreed.

>
 Raven looked Price up and down. Wesley was beside himself, having never seen a woman that exerted her presence as Raven did. "I hope you're not afraid of getting that suit of yours wrinkled," she said. "Because it's going to get a little hairy in here shortly."

>
 "It already has," a familiar voice rang out from behind the desk.

>
 With a swift leap, Razor landed on the top of the librarian's desk, blades ready for battle. She snapped her fingers and her forces stepped forth from the shelves on the next floor. A group of Raven's pack members, headed up by Deacon and a face that Raven was not counting on seeing at this encounter.

>
 "Natasha," Raven said, shocked.

>
 "Yes, sister," Natasha hissed. "Time for some fresh blood...preferably yours."

>
 "You knew I wouldn't come alone," Razor chortled.

>
 Raven looked to the windows. Dusk was looming outside like a cloud of uncertainty.

>
 "Sorry, hun," Razor sneered, "still a little early for your vampire savior to come to your rescue. By the time his alarm goes off, all of this will be over." She took a moment to let an evil smile grace her lips. "And I think as my first priority as pack leader, I'll just have to hunt him down and use him as my victory feast."

>
 "Not likely," a dark voice said from the doorway to the library.

>
 Lucius entered, with his pack trailing behind him, ready for the fight.

>
 Raven smiled, "You didn't think I'd come alone, did you?" she cooed sarcastically.

>
 "No matter," Razor smiled. "You'll still die, even with this group of misfits."

>
 "And this group of misfits," Buffy said, rising. Each slayerette followed her lead, rising and facing Razor.

>
 Razor laughed wickedly. "You humans always amuse me!" she
cackled. "Just watch while I take what I want!"
>
 Razor flipped forward towards Raven, legs outstretched in a
flying kick. Raven threw up her arms in a block, connecting with
Razor and flipping her over. Razor rose, facing Raven, and Raven
reached into her boots, pulling her fans.
>
 Deacon and the minions from the second level of the library
jumped down to the main floor, greeted by a wall of Lucius' pack
members and Buffy and the slayerettes.
>
 "Let it begin," Razor growled.
>

> <p>

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>

> <p>

End
file.